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ABSTRACT

Relocation of corporate middle and upper management has been part of the larger value system through which the long arm of the job has reached into family life. Changes in family and organizational values and structures have eroded the basis on which managerial relocation is perceived as essential to upward mobility in the modern corporation. New corporate cultures espouse values such as customer satisfaction, service, and quality production that foster attention to human concerns. At the same time, family values are shifting toward self-actualization, full employment opportunity for males and females, and intergenerational responsibility. An annual "corporate draft" might be an appropriate replacement for current relocation practice. Draftees are divided into "fish" who desire to advance comfortably within the security of employment with a single corporation or in a specified geographic area and "sharks" who are willing to make any move required to further their careers. Technology exists for a computerized draft system to be implemented. Corporations provide information about job openings; workers provide information about their expertise and goals. Information is available on an ongoing basis; the "draft" occurs only at the universal end of a corporate fiscal year. Draftees and their employers negotiate 1-2 year contracts based on mutual needs and expectations. The system would be funded through user fees. (36 references) (YLB)

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This chapter examines job-related transfers of corporate middle and upper management as an artifact of the values and reward systems of hierarchical organizational structures. We propose that changes in family and organizational values and structures have eroded the basis on which managerial relocation is perceived as essential to upward mobility in the modern corporation. Further, we suggest an alternative paradigm for modifying managerial relocation to better suit changing organizational and family needs.

Historical Perspectives on Managerial Relocation

The Organization Man "keeps on moving, year after year, until perhaps, that distant day when he is summoned back to Rome." (Whyte, 1956). The relocation ritual is symbolic of the linkage

between family and corporation and the predominance of corporate interests. The ritual has been maintained as part of a reward system that includes promotion through the management hierarchy, meeting the desires of mobile personnel, and the corporate organization exercising control over its members.

Relocation has been part of the larger value system of which the long arm of the job has reached into family life. The achieving society that has supported American industrial growth has valued collective identity, collective security, and the subordination of family to workplace demands (Lynd & Lynd, 1937; Mills, 1956; Whyte, 1956). Organization families are committed to the corporate lifestyle (Gullotta & Donohue, 1981; Orthner, Bowen, & Beare, 1990; Hanks, 1990). Theorists have pointed to the powerful role of work organizations in providing benefits and demands that have shaped family life (Kanter, 1977; Coser, 1974; Berger & Berger, 1883; Hareven, 1984; Cornfield, 1990).

Ranging from clearly nomadic lifestyles to the job movement associated with modern day labor force participation, people have demonstrated willingness to change their geographic location in search of economic advantage. Major change in American values came with the adjustment to large scale industrial development in the decade from 1850-1860 (Cochran & Miller, 1951; Cochran, 1985). Nearly half of all the businesses chartered in America between 1800 and 1860 were chartered in the fifties. Much of American economic production shifted from farm or small trade centers where people

knew each other and held loyalties to community, church, and family to industrial sites where values were placed on prestigious positions, loyalty to an organization, scientific knowledge, and long range planning.

Another major shift in values followed the transfer of organizational power into the hands of people who were not the principal owners of the enterprise. The emergence of the business corporation as a means of controlling risk and creating tremendous fortunes for directors was followed by waves of mergers and centralization of control in the 1870s and 1880s. The decade of the nineties saw the establishment of a few corporate centers and the removal of policy making from the worksite (Cochran, 1985).

The emergence of the professional managerial role changed priorities of industry and for workers who would excel (Taylor, 1911; Mayo, 1945). As one General Electric executive noted, "We spent the years up to 1930 trying to get more work out of workers and the years from then on trying to get more work out of management" (Cochran, 1985:70). Corporations became willing to invest large sums into hiring, training, and keeping the right person in the right job.

Separation of work, management, and ownership; the establishment of a complementary reward system; and the institutionalization of supporting values provided the context for what Whyte (1956) described as social engineering. Here the purpose was management training became to produce skilled leaders

who would "guide men back, benevolently, to group belongingness" (p.33).

The organization society that Whyte (1956) described was a setting in which the unorthodox was dangerous. Conformity among managers increased as their position in the corporate power structure advanced. Eventually it spilled over into other life sectors, including family, community, and recreation. In this climate, corporate managerial relocation emerged with two purposes: (1) to provide management training and experience and (2) to fill jobs internally with qualified employees. Both purposes were based on the value corporations placed on commitment to employees over the long term.

Employee and family compliance with expectations to relocate was grounded in the beliefs that geographic transfers were in some way associated with upward mobility in the corporation. This was accompanied with fears that refusals would be seen as disloyalty to the corporation or deter progress up the corporate ladder.

Economic Perspectives on Managerial Relocation

Little attention was given to the needs of managers' families during the early years of this new management training strategy. Traditional lifestyles allowed whole families to be relocated to meet the demands of one spouse's career. Job mobility is largely a function of labor market conditions, with attention to personal and

family needs higher when there is greater demand for workers in any occupational system (Sussman & Cogswell, 1971).

The average cost of relocating a middle manager increased four-fold from the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s. Part of this cost was due to increased corporate services around relocation. Corporate families came to expect that "relocation packages" would include such perks as house hunting trips, shipment of household goods, assistance with disposal and acquisition of a primary residence, cost of living differentials, temporary living expenses, and direct payments of incentives to move (Milkrondt, 1983). Relocation costs could be justified as long as employers, employees, and their families remained committed to the value of relocation in hiring and keeping the "right man in the right job." That commitment has been seriously challenged with organizational and family changes during the last decade.

In the hierarchical mode of corporate transfers from within the organization, relocation sets in motion a domino effect. Movement of a highly placed manager to another location with a promotion requires replacement and movement of another person into the slot, another replacement for the last mentioned, and on and on down the line. Thus, the cost to the company is not a single move, but multiple moves. There is a need for another relocation procedure that will be cognizant of corporate and family concerns and one that provides options for all individuals involved.

The Occasion for Change Around Managerial Relocation

Recent decades have brought social and organizational changes that challenge both family and corporate assumptions about the nature of employer/employee/family relationships. Changes which will directly affect relocation are:

* Numbers of women in the workforce, particularly those in professional/managerial roles and dual career families, have increased dramatically. From 1984 to 1987, women in executive, managerial, and administrative positions rose from 4% to 36% of employed women. Nearly 75% of current transfers involve dual career families (Schoeni, 1991).

* Management's motivation for transferring young executives is shifting from training to the sharing of expertise. Young recruits enter corporate life with a level of global sophistication well beyond their counterparts in previous cohorts.

* Technological advances have made it possible to exchange knowledge globally without relocation of the employee's primary residence. These developments influence the way work is done and change the tasks of managers. In the future, geographic relocation will become less essential to accomplishing corporate priorities.

* The 1980s saw decreased commitment by employers and employees to lifelong employment with a single corporation (Mirkin, 1987; Buckley, 1989; Hanks, 1990). Loyalty began to shift from company to self. Under these conditions relocation is increasingly likely to accompany a self-managed career change.

* As baby boomers flood the ranks of middle and upper management, their social history will have an impact on a variety of corporate benefits policies. The generation that coined the phrase, "Hell no, we won't go!" is likely to understand relocation resistance in their own ranks and among younger employees. Workers are currently refusing relocation at a rate over 40%, up from under 10% in 1973 (Schoeni, 1991).

* The increased investment of the workforce in local community and leisure activities produces relocation resistance (Christenson, et al., 1985). Ironically, corporate support for volunteerism may undercut relocation as a management strategy by increasing opportunities for potential transferees to build community ties.

* Increased concern of families over rising medical care costs and quality of care for members with disabilities and elderly relatives make families resistant to change in existing successful arrangements. Indeed, families may initiate relocation in order to secure quality care and then resist subsequent offers of transfer (Sussman, 1979).

Since the mid-1980s, corporations have begun the process of transformation. New corporate cultures have emerged espousing values such as customer satisfaction, service, and quality production. Such values foster attention to human concerns and people-relatedness. At the same time, family values are shifting toward self actualization, full employment opportunity for males and females, and intergenerational responsibility. New paradigms for reward systems are in development around emerging family and corporate values. The focal issue is relocation, prescribed movement of an employee and her or his family to a location decided by the corporation. This "best interest of the corporation" approach is being modified by a crescendo of corporate voices, particularly those of corporate family members, adopting the credo, "the best interest of families."

Family/organization linkages are reciprocal (Sussman, 1974, 1979). Either the work organization or the family system can initiate change through effective mediating skills. Linkage may be formed by either the family or the organization and dissolved once objectives are institutionalized in the target organization. In Sussman's view, the family system is a powerful change agent in spite of its dependency on the work organization for employment of one or more of its members.

Families sometimes initiate relocation, or at least take advantage of relocation opportunities, to leave unhappy situations,

meet family needs such as elder care or special treatment of handicapped members, or conquer boredom. Relocation is often a more viable option than changing employers, particularly in single career families and among managers who expect to spend most of their worklife with one company.

The notion that either family or organization can initiate change in the other through established or emerging linkages gives impetus to the exploration of concurrent changes in corporate/family relationships. These have emerged as workforce participation, family structures, and corporate priorities have changed. At least three organizational changes are influencing paradigmatic change in the relationship between relocation and reward: (1) more organizations are moving toward non-hierarchical management structures, (2) workers and managers are connecting as individuals, computer-to-computer if not mind-to-mind, and (3) specialization and professional identity are replacing company loyalty as the dominant unifying mechanism among workers and managers. Corporations and the managers who work for them are investing less in longterm careers with single organizations. Individuals in the corporate setting are self-managing their careers in entrepreneurial fashion. The tendency to move from retention to replacement strategies in workforce management is characteristic of a labor market where supply exceeds demand. Replacement/retention strategies vary across industries (Hacken, 1992). We suggest that workers' orientations toward replacement/retention may vary across family organization linkage priorities as well.

The Corporate Draft

We propose that an annual "corporate draft" would be an appropriate replacement for current relocation practice. This proposal assumes that there exists a universal set of management and professional skills that can be adapted to individual corporate needs with minimal training. The draft system would provide rewards that recognize that expertise cuts across the essential business of a number of organizations and may cut across industries. The draft would create a management relocation network to match corporate needs with individual talents and desires. Corporations would be able to recoup their training investments by selecting people who are equally trained by other organizations from a pool of eligibles.

The "corporate draft" suggests an alternative way for upward mobility. One such model that is highly organized and already in place is found in professional sports and another unorganized is functioning in academia. In such sports as football, basketball, and hockey, there is a beginning draft of entry novitiates once a year by the major leagues. Players are "properties" of the corporate owners. Each sport has developed a system of trades in which teams are compensated for the presumed worth of the players.

Primarily through the activities of the players, free agency systems were evolved where players can make themselves available

to other clubs at the highest salary along with endemic accoutrements and perks. This availability to enter the market after a period of service to the owner team enables vertical mobility through team transfers. In a substantial number of free agency situations, the owner club will bid successfully to keep its star, discovering the player's worth from offers made by competing teams.

The system provides multiple options for both players and clubs. The players who have done basic training and adequate service for a number of years can enter the free agency market and lessen the control of their owner clubs over their occupational lives. The club can bid for players from other teams to fill particular positions where they perceive weaknesses or need for playing improvement. Such a system has little or nonexistent training costs except those engendered during the rookie years and fosters entrepreneurship and competition that are the cornerstones of the free enterprise system.

Individuals pursuing academic careers often enter as novitiate teachers and advance into administration, making a number of lateral, hierarchical, and angular moves through the ranks of single institution as well as schools of different sizes and prestigious rankings. Identifiable titles (i.e., assistant professor, associate professor, professor, named professor, department chair, dean, vice president, provost, president, chancellor) cut across institutions to mark the progress of an academic career.

Differences in needs and ambitions of managers in a pool of eligibles must be identified. Draftees are divided into "fish," those desiring to advance comfortably within the security of employment with a single corporation or in a specified geographic area, and "sharks," those who are willing to make any move required to further their careers. Fast and slow tracking of careers under this system is an open process with full knowledge of all participants. This is similar to Gouldner's (1957, 1958) concept of "locals and cosmopolitans"; those individuals who spend their lives, rooted in a job and community; compared to persons who crave movement and locate in major population centers. There appears to be a fit between their personalities, achievement, and desires for upward mobility. Indeed, employees already self-select tracks which require more or less geographic mobility. For example, Hanks (1990) reported that veterans of multi-national chemical corporations described the process of choosing the research over the management track if geographic stability was a priority of their families.

Technology exists for a computerized draft system to be implemented. Corporations provide information about job openings based on technical, human resource, and geographic parameters. Workers provide information about expertise, career goals, personal and family needs, and willingness to relocate. Information is available on an ongoing basis, but the "corporate draft" occurs only at the universal end of a corporate fiscal year. Draftees and their new

employers negotiate 1-2 year contracts based on mutual needs and expectations.

Some industries may chose to enter "available immediately" for workers and managers who become available "out of season." This adjunct component of the information network would provide a year round placement service through which personnel are moved based on need and availability. Various workforce reduction strategies would be minimized. Other industries might choose to put all eligibles in the annual draft, paying severance pay to terminees during their waiting periods.

The support network for the draft system would have to be built gradually, beginning perhaps within one product line of one corporation or within one professional management association in one industry. The system would be paid for on a user fee basis. Set-up would be an industry wide investment. Eventually, systems could be refined to provide computer screening of some characteristics of jobs and draftees based on information provided by corporations and eligibles.

It is important to recognize that the "corporate draft" is a voluntary system. Entry into the system implies availability for relocation at least regionally. Personnel who elect not to go into the system function within established industry norms for their position. The linkage between corporate needs and individual hopes, desires, and expectations in all life sectors would be maximized. Relocation,

as well as a number of other eventualities that may affect family members, would fit within the framework of parameters by draftees and prospective employers.

The corporate draft will require companies and potential draftees to increase information made available about jobs, wages, organizational structures, and employee qualifications. "Information workers hold about the value of a prospective job is highly imperfect" (Halaby, 1988). Although little research attention has been given to the relationship of high quality information about a prospective job to subsequent success in the job, current research suggests that the quality of the initial screen is associated with risk of mismatch (Halaby, 1988; Datcher, 1983; Viscusi, 1980; Meitzen, 1986).

Analysis of gender differences in rates of quitting jobs to move within a labor market indicates that males quit and search more often than females (Barnes and Jones, 1974). Gender differences are usually attributed to limitations on job opportunities and wage gains women may achieve by changing jobs (Halaby, 1988). The corporate draft could reduce gender differences, the quit/search/rehire process. Research would be needed to monitor the effect of the corporate draft on gender differences in job mobility.

Conclusion

Relocation is no longer a corporate implementation of the traditional expression, "long arm of the job," where an employee goes unquestioningly to the place where the corporation says there is work. Economic, social, political, and demographic conditions and realities have created in many work situations a co-partnership built around superordinate goals (Sherif, et al., 1954). Superordinate goals are those objectives shared by members of a group, two or several groups that appear to be unattainable unless members of the groups work together with tolerance and harmony. To do this they have to discard or neutralize their prejudices, fears, and animosities to get on with the task at hand. The "ingroupness" of the family and corporation where each looks upon the other as being an outgroup diminishes.

This is a time of creative chaos for corporations and families. It is also a time of "leaky margins" where barriers between groups are disappearing (Houston, 1990). If not in policy, at least in language, corporations are recognizing the need to copartner with employes and their families in developing benefits. Walmart Stores has labeled its human resource department the "People Division." Geographic relocation in that company is innovative, sometimes involving managers assisting physically with the moves of a valued employee (Johnson, !989). DuPont has a division of Workforce Partnering concerned with development of benefits around family caregiving and other family issues. In place there is increasingly accommodation and reciprocal exchange and penetration of ideas, feelings, perceptions, values, and behaviors between families and

corporations (Hanks & Sussman, 1990). There is no turning back from a new order of corporate/family copartnership to the old unquestioned loyalty to the corporation and its unique empowering function of the status and position of the individual. No longer is the corporation a "greedy institution" claiming the devotion and energy of its members by weakening the ties of its members with other institutions and groups, especially the family (Coser, 1974). The meaning of work and life itself is resonating throughout the land. New definitions of family and endemic practices of nurturance, intimacy, harmony, as well as conflict are emerging. These "wider families" consist of individuals not related by blood or marriage and varying in complexity, interests, and structure (Marciano, 1988). These units built around neighborhoods, jobs, leisure pursuits, and church membership, to illustrate a few, will vary in importance and influence to the individual over her or his career, Membership in such wider families also will change over time. Whatever occurs, such groupings, traditional and wider families, will be the corporation's partners in the new economic order. The managerial draft proposed in this paper is one manifestation of a new sociology of family/corporation linkage.

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